

Tennessee State Parks Montgomery Bell State Park Strategic Management Plan

2023 – 2033



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Park Purpose, History and Description

“Montgomery Bell State Park will be forever preserved by the people of Tennessee as a site that was established in 1943 by the National Park Service as a Civilian Conservation Corps reclamation project to preserve and protect the historical significance of the iron ore industry of the 1800’s and the birthplace of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church February 4, 1810.

The 3850 acres at Montgomery Bell State Park now offers ample recreational opportunities including, but not limited to, mountain bike trails, camping, hiking trails, an 18-hole golf course, two Group Camps as well as a Lodge, Conference Center and open spaces. Interpretive programs such as nature hikes, reptile and birds of prey programs are offered to showcase the abundant and diverse flora and fauna of the western highland rim of middle Tennessee. Montgomery Bell State Park will continue to preserve the past while maintaining the resources and intrinsic values for all generations.”

Montgomery Bell State Park’s significance originates back to the Native American cultures from Paleo period through Woodland period. From there the historical significance includes Montgomery Bell and the iron industry as well as Richard Napier’s Laurel Furnace.

The parks historical significance continues through Samuel McAdow and the founding of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. These events help the park to promote the importance of the natural resources such as iron ore, sandstone, and timber on the western highland rim. In addition the park provides a link to the history of Pioneer life in the 1800’s as well as the religious revivals of the late 18th century and the expansion of the Cumberland Territory. The parks significance also includes the natural resources used in the early development of industry in middle Tennessee and the flora and fauna of the western highland rim.

As the civil war came to Dickson County the park gained significance through the US Military Civil War Railroad and McNairy’s Raids on that railroad line. By the 1930’s this parks significance came through the actual CCC and WPA development and reforestation of the area. During this development a park office (Old Park Office) was built, as well as 2 group camps, 2 lakes including the Lake Woodhaven Spillway. In the 1970’s a third lake was added to the park to increase the capacity of natural and cultural benefits to the public.

Goals, Objectives and Action Plans

THE RESOURCES: Exemplary Natural and Cultural Stewardship

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be nationally recognized for exemplary stewardship of natural and cultural resources.

Objective - *More and better stewards:* Increase internal and external stewards who share Tennessee State Parks core values and can contribute to the State Parks mission to preserve, protect, and share Tennessee’s natural and cultural resources.

Action Plan: Ranger staff will schedule and execute events that include promotion and education of natural and cultural opportunities for stewardship through educational or hands on opportunities. Ranger staff will work with parks staff by providing fam tours, additional training

opportunities to include: native plants, environmental awareness, and cultural resources of Montgomery Bell State Park.

Objective - *Better resource management practices:* Identify, manage, and restore unique natural and cultural resources for generations to come.

Action Plan: The park staff will continue the timber management project to restore the parks forest to an oak/hickory savannah and reestablish native grasslands and cedar glades. The park will monitor the health of unique natural areas and ecosystems such as Hall Springs. The park will extend access to cultural resources such as the CCC camp through the creation of a connector trail with interpretive signage to the camp. The park will reclaim the Laurel Furnace Interpretive site through clearing encroaching vegetation and increasing interpretive signage. The park will continue to foster the partnership between the Cumberland Presbyterian Birthplace Shrine and Log House by maintaining open communication as well as through cooperative events and programming such as Christmas at the Bell, Lantern Tours, and historic interpretation.

Objective: *Better data and technology:* Leverage data and technology to help inform and guide decisions on natural and cultural resources stewardship.

Action Plan: The park staff will encourage inventory development of park resources with assistance from visitors through apps such as I-Naturalist, Survey 123, Field Maps, Avenza, through passive education such as QR codes, social media and during staff interactions.

THE VISITOR: Welcoming and Inviting to All

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be the most accessible, welcoming, and inviting system of parks that enriches Tennesseans and visitors through excellent interpretation, education, and resource-based recreation.

Objective: *accessible, welcoming, and inviting to all:* create quality and varied programs of interpretation, recreation, and outreach so that all audiences feel welcome and invited.

Action Plan: Staff will be trained to be approachable by all visitors. Facilities and park grounds will be maintained, clean, and orderly. The park will complete research to increase the diversity of programs, telling more full stories of women and minorities relevant to the park's history. The park will expand the accessibility by adding increased ADA opportunities to improve access to our trail system. The park will improve signage to accommodate various audio/visual disabilities. This will include interactive interpretive display panels and viewfinders, thereby making Montgomery Bell State Park accessible for all visitors.

Objective: *high quality programming:* develop and support mission-based and resource-relevant programs to engage visitors, empower staff, and develop community wellbeing.

Action Plan: Montgomery Bell State Park shall provide quality interpretive programs in the park as well as outreach to different organizations. The interpretive programs shall highlight the historical significance that Montgomery Bell had on Dickson County, Richard Napier's Laurel Furnace and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, CCC, through lenses of various roles, as well as the flora, fauna and geological resources of the western highland rim of middle Tennessee.

Objective: *resource-based outdoor recreation:* provide resource-based outdoor recreation opportunities that ensure representation of Tennessee’s natural, scenic, and cultural resources.

Action Plan: The park will continue to utilize the 3 lakes and waterways to provide recreational opportunities and interpret the aquatic ecosystem. The park will hold special events such as Junior Ranger, Camp Tanase, Ernest Day, and the SIR program to promote the use of the resources of Montgomery Bell State Park. The park will provide hiking, camping, backcountry camping, bird watching, butterfly checklist and have more open recreational fields.

THE AMENITIES: Well-Maintained Facilities and Amenities

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be well maintained with facilities and amenities that delight visitors and make Tennesseans proud.

Objective: *Improve maintenance:* Improve overall maintenance and upkeep of all park facilities and amenities that contribute to meaningful visitor experiences.

Action Plan: The park will continually monitor the condition of all facilities and submit recommendations for improvements and upkeep by utilizing HIPPO Software. With the use of GIS, will map out all waterlines and water cut-offs.

Objective: *Better park accessibility:* ensure all visitors have opportunities for meaningful experiences in every Tennessee State Park.

Action Plan: The park will ensure that roadways/parking lots are maintained in a safe and inviting condition. ADA accessibility will continually be evaluated for opportunities to improve customer experience with a non-motorized all terrain trail.

Objective: *Quality and welcoming facilities and amenities:* provide high-quality and well-planned facilities and amenities that enrich the visitor experience.

Action Plan: The park will invest in fiber optic internet at facilities, updated campground with 200 AMP Service. The Park Office will have charging stations for electric cars.

THE OPERATIONS: Operational Excellence

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be a national model for operational excellence in a state park system.

Objective: *Support and empower our people:* support and empower our workforce by creating a caring environment that encourages professional growth and great customer service.

Action Plan: Career advancement opportunities will be communicated to all employees. Diverse Workforce.

Objective: *Efficient and effective operations:* provide efficient, effective, and fiscally responsible service to Tennesseans and our visitors.

Action Plan: Monthly and annually budget reports will be monitored to promote fiscal responsibility. Implement a plan to have more frequent budget reports.

Park Overview

Site Fact Sheet

Park Name	Montgomery Bell State Park
Site Manager	Pat Wright
Area Manager	Ryan Forbess
Park acreage	3,850
Total number of visitors (FY 2022)	1,423,316
Total expenses before CO (FY 2022)	\$1,243,473
Total revenues (FY 2022)	\$936,400
Retail cost recovery % ¹	65%
Park cost recovery %	45%
Average expense per visitor (FY 2022)	\$1.45
Average revenue per visitor (FY 2022)	\$0.65
Gross profit or loss	(\$307,373.00)
Total full-time available positions / filled	64/filled
Total part-time available positions / filled	25/filled
Primary feeder markets	Dickson, Davidson, Williamson Counties
Primary reasons people visit	Vacation / leisure / recreation
Opportunities for improvement	Increase fees – Camping, fee-based programs

Key Attractions

The amenities or features listed below are those that seem to be most popular for visitors.

- Lake Woodhaven Spillway
- Cumberland Church Shrine and Log Cabin
- Lodge, Golf Course, Cabins
- Campground, Group Camp
- Seasonal Boat Rental and swimming
- Mountain bike trail, hiking trails
- Aviary and birds of prey exhibit
- Fishing & Archery Range

¹ Based on T.C.A. 11-3-305, Cost recovery of revenue-generating facilities

Site and Operations Assessment

This site and operations assessment is a culmination of analyses and findings from a review of the condition of facilities, infrastructure, and operations at Montgomery Bell State Park. The findings and observations are not intended to be an exhaustive review of all issues present but provide a basic understanding of the predominant issues that contribute to the site’s current operating conditions. The assessment includes the following:

1. Site and Facilities Assessment
2. Operational Assessment
3. Financial Assessment

Site and Facility Assessment

Methodology

Facility and asset conditions are rated using a differential scale of excellent, good, fair, or poor. Descriptions of conditions that are attributed to each of these findings are also provided.

Scale of Conditions	
Rating	General Description
Excellent	Facilities/amenities are in ‘excellent’ condition when they show little or no maintenance or repair problems. Facilities do not feature any major design or operational issues or flaws that contribute to diminished use or increased maintenance or upkeep. Facilities are easy to clean and maintain in order to place them back into public use and the users perceive them to be in excellent shape.
Good	Facilities/amenities are in ‘good’ condition when they show only minor maintenance or repair problems. Most maintenance issues with these facilities typically appear to be the result of age and/or heavy use. Facilities may only feature minor design or operational issues that contribute to diminished use or increased maintenance or upkeep. Facilities are moderately easy to clean and maintain in order to place them back into service and the users perceive them to be adequate for their use, but probably not in excellent shape.
Fair	Facilities/amenities are in ‘fair’ condition when they show significant maintenance or repair problems. Facilities generally exhibit ongoing maintenance issues that appear to be the result of age, heavy use, or design or operational flaws. Some maintenance and repair needs may compound their fair condition by being deferred because of budget and/or resource limitations. Facilities require more effort to clean and maintain before placing them back into service and the users may perceive them as being less than adequate for their use and in a state of deterioration. The facility or structure may need of major repair or replacement.
Poor	Facilities/amenities are in ‘poor’ condition when they show significant, on-going maintenance or repair problems that ultimately may result in suspended use for repair/replacement. Maintenance and repair issues are possibly the result of poor maintenance and clearly the result of age, heavy use, or design or operational flaws. Problems with the facilities are often compounded over time due to consistently deferred maintenance and repair because of budget and/or resource limitations. Facilities may feature major design or operational issues that contribute to diminished use or increased maintenance or upkeep. Facilities require excessive effort to clean and maintain before placing them back into service and the users often perceive them as being inadequate for their use and in a state of serious deterioration. The facility or structure may need of major repair or replacement.

Facility Inventory and Assessment

The table below is an inventory of facilities and amenities at Montgomery Bell State Park, and provides the assessed condition of each as reviewed in April 2023.

Site Asset / Amenity	Quantity	Condition
Ranger Residences	6	Fair
Picnic Shelters / bathrooms	6	Fair
Maintenance Facilities	6	Fair
Group Camp 1	37	Fair
Campground	1	Good
Bathhouses Campground	3	Good
Warehouse	1	Poor
Visitor Center	1	Good
Golf Course	1	Fair
Lodge (122 rooms, restaurant)	1	Good
Cabins	8	Good

Trail Inventory and Assessment

Trail Name	Mileage
Acorn Lake Water Trail	1.31
Bakers Cemetery Trail	0.63
Blue Mountain Bike Trail	5.07
Creech Hollow Lake Water Trail	1.31
Creech Hollow Trail	1.23
Green Mountain Bike Trail	3.50
Jim Bailey Nature Trail	0.52
Lake Woodhaven Water Trail	1.56
Montgomery Bell Trail	10.24
Ore Pit Trail	1.52
Red Mountain Bike Trail	2.89
Spillway Trail	0.56
White Mountain Bike Trail	4.58
Wildcat Trail	1.25
Woodland Shelter Trail	0.29
Yellow Mountain Bike Trail	5.66
Grand Total	42.11

Montgomery Bell State Park staff have inventoried and identified fall line trail and drainage issues on segments of the MB Trail, Ore Pit Loop trail, and the Blue and Green Mountain bike trails. These areas will require varied levels of maintenance from de-berming to help shed water up to trail relocation and rerouting to maintain long term use of the trails. The park should have additional staff to help maintain and upkeep current trail system.

New Assets Needed

List new assets and amenities that would fall under capital expenditures that are needed to improve visitor experience and operational efficiency.

New Asset & Amenities	Description
Playgrounds	ADA accessible playgrounds
New amenities at Golf Shelter	Restroom, electricity, playground, parking
Handicap parking at swim beach	New handicap parking spaces at the swim beach
Restrooms at Mountain bike trail	New restrooms at the mountain biking trail
Additional parking	Park wide
Install fiber optics	Park wide
New restrooms at boat access	Lake Woodhaven

Prioritized Facility Needs

Based on the facility inventory and assessment, these prioritized needs have been identified.

Facility Need	Priority Assignment
Playgrounds	High
Picnic Shelters	Medium
Visitor Center ADA compliance	High
Construct new general store	Low
Bathrooms at golf course shelter	High
Bathroom access at Park Office when office is closed	High
Replace/update Spillway restroom	High
Replace irrigation system at the golf course	High

Operational Assessment

The Operational Assessment includes:

1. An inventory and classification of programs and services being provided at the site,
2. A review of staffing at the site,
3. A review of concessionaires and partners operating at the site,
4. Visitation and customer satisfaction, and
5. Professional development and training.

Inventory and Classification of Programs and Services

Programs and services are classified into one of three major categories:

- 1) Core or Essential Services;
- 2) Important Services; and
- 3) Value added or Visitor Supported Services.

Functions of the site are classified into these categories based in part on the mission and public mandates for both the site and the agency. For the programs and services in each of these categories, there are financial performance expectations that will define how services are funded and evaluated.

Category 1 – Core Services *[Largely supported by public subsidies]*

Core programs, services and facilities are those the agency must provide and/or are essential in order to capably govern and meet statutory requirements. The failure of the agency to provide Category 1 services at adequate levels could result in significant negative consequences for the public and the resources under protection. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as core or essential are:

- The services are mandated by the agency's law or charter or are contractually obligated by agreement to provide the services.
- The services are essential to protecting and supporting the public's health and safety.
- The services protect and maintain valuable assets and infrastructure.
- The services would generally and reasonably be expected and supported by residents, businesses, customers and partners.
- The services are those that cannot or should not be provided by the private sector.
- The services provide a sound investment of public funds.

The following programs and services offered at Montgomery Bell State Park have been identified as **core services**:

- Public Safety, Programming
- Outdoor open space recreation
- Nature experience
- Resource management
- Maintenance

CATEGORY 2 – IMPORTANT SERVICES *[Supported by a balance of revenues and public subsidy]*

Important programs, services and facilities are those the agency should provide, and are important to governing and effectively serving residents, businesses, customers and partners. Providing Category 2 services expands or enhances the agency's ability to provide and sustain its core services. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as important are:

- The services expand, enhance or support identified core services.
- The services are broadly supported and utilized by the community, and are considered an appropriate, important, and valuable public good. Public support may be conditional upon the manner by which the services are paid for or funded.
- The services generate income or revenue that offsets some or all of the operating cost and/or are deemed to provide economic, social or environmental outcomes or results.

The following programs and services offered at Montgomery Bell State Park have been identified as **important services**:

- Camp Tanase
- Jr Ranger program
- SIR program
- Raptor Program
- Honey Bee / pollinator project
- Maintain effective relationships with volunteers and friends group
- ADA paved trail

CATEGORY 3 – VISITOR SUPPORTED SERVICES *[Almost exclusively supported by earned revenue]*

Visitor supported programs, services and facilities are those discretionary services that the agency may provide when additional funding or revenue exists to offset the cost of providing those services. Category 3 services provide added value above and beyond what is required or expected. The criteria for programs or services to be classified as visitor supported are:

- The services expand, enhance or support Core Services, Important Services and the quality of life of the visitors, community or stakeholders.
- The services are supported, valued and well utilized and provide an appropriate and valuable public benefit.
- The services generate income or funding from sponsorships, grants, user fees or other sources that offset some or all of their cost and/or provides a meaningful return on investment.
- The Services can possibly be provided through outsourcing or use of concessionaires, providing opportunities for community enterprise or services that may not otherwise be provided by the agency.

The following programs and services offered at Montgomery Bell State Park have been identified as **visitor supported services**:

- Seasonal boat rental
- Camp Tanase
- Bellringer 50k
- Ernest Day
- Special use permit walk / run events
- Lodge
- Restaurant
- Golf course

Personnel / Staffing Review

Personnel and staffing at _Montgomery Bell State Park represent the largest area of budgetary expense. The tables below and on the following page provide a basic review of the current staffing at the site.

Full Time Equivalent Employees (State Park only)

Position / Title	Quantity (FTE)	Compensation Total
Park Manager 3	1	*
ASA 2	1	50,556
Park Ranger 2	5	*
Account Clerk	1	34,236
Clerk 2	1	27,760
Storekeeper 1	1	34,236
Facilities Supervisor	1	60,300
Con Wkr 3	1	38,184
Equip Mech I	1	47,976
Con Wkr 2	2	70,104
Con Wkr 1	2	112,368
TOTAL	17	\$882,368

**Law enforcement compensation confidential by TN law.*

Full Time Equivalent Employees (Hospitality and Golf)

Position / Title	Quantity (FTE)	Compensation Total
General Manager	1	60,300
Director of Operations	1	56,976
Food and Beverage Director	1	53,400
Sales Manager	1	42,924
Sales and Event Coordinator	1	33,900
Administrative Assist 1	1	42,504
Account Clerk	1	33,900
Front Desk Supervisor	1	37,900
Lead Front Desk Clerk	1	30,204
Front Desk Clerk	1	27,495
Lead Night Clerk	1	35,388
Night Clerk	1	34,008
Housekeeping Supervisor	1	34,236
Lead Room Attendant	1	33,252
Room Attendant	4	116,667
Custodial Worker	2	52,044
Chief of Maintenance	1	53,940
Maintenance Supervisor	1	42,924

Maintenance Technician	2	67,900
Kitchen Manager	1	47,496
Lead Cook	3	101,700
Line Cook	2	60,708
Lead Dishwasher	1	30,504
Restaurant Manager	1	47,976
Lead Server	2	40,950
Server	1	16,575
Host	1	24,999
Golf Course Manager	1	60,696
Greens Keeper	1	50,700
Hospitality Assistant 1	1	34,236
Equipment Mechanic	1	47,496
Clerk 2	1	27,780
Grounds Worker 2	1	34,104
Conservation Worker	2	60,708
Food Service Worker	1	25,224
Laborer	2	55,576
TOTAL	47	1,601,714

Part Time Employees (State Park only)

Position / Title	Quantity	Compensation Total
Con Worker 1	5	151,028
TOTAL	5	151,028

Part Time Employees (Hospitality and Golf)

Position / Title	Quantity	Compensation Total
Front Desk Clerk	3	82,791
Room Attendant	3	83,364
Line Cook	1	30,206
Server	3	49,725
Bartender	1	16,575
Dishwasher	1	27,495

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Custodial Worker	1	25,253
Conservation Worker	4	121,700
Food Service Worker	1	23,693
Laborer	2	55,576
TOTAL	20	\$516,378

Labor Support

Labor Support	Annual Hours
Volunteers	1500
Community Service Workers	
Engineering and Construction Crews	
Resource Management Crews	
Other: Prison work crew	800
TOTAL	2300

Total Labor Compensation Expense

Labor Type	Labor Expense
Full Time Equivalent Employees (State Park)	\$882,368
Full Time Equivalent Employees (Hospitality)	\$1,601,714
Part Time Employees (State Park)	\$151,028
Part Time Employees (Hospitality)	\$516,378
TOTAL Annual Labor Expense	\$3,151,488

Additional Future Positions Needed

Position / Title	Quantity	FTE or PT	Year Needed	Justification
PARK RANGER 3	1	FTE	2024	See #1 below
Conservation Worker 1	4	FTE	2024	See #2 below
Conservation Worker 1	1	PT	2024	See #2 below
Clerk 3	1	FTE	2024	See #3 below
Clerk 3	1	PT	2024	See #3 below
Full time Campground Attendant	1	FTE	2024	See #3 below
Park Manager 1	1	FTE	2024	See #4 below
Seasonal positions for Trail work	3	PT	2024	See #5 below
TOTAL	13			

Justification

1. Due to COVID-19, park visitation has drastically increased. This increased visitation has caused more patrol hours needed, more interaction with visitors, more requests for interpretive programs, more camping, and more interaction with the homeless.
2. Due to COVID-19, park visitation has drastically increased. This increase has caused more usage of facilities that requires more maintenance to structures, repairs, garbage pick-up and repairs. In 1987 Park maintenance had 12 full-time positions, in 2023, Park Maintenance has 7.
3. Due to COVID-19, park visitation has increased. This new clerk position is needed to help with the increased camping, shelter, programming and backcountry reservations as well as gift shop sales, inventory and customer service.
4. The park had a park manager 1 position. In 1998 the position was reallocated. Other resort parks of similar amenities have both a PM3 and PM 1.
5. Due to increased visitation by individual users as well as large events increased trail maintenance is required.

Financial Performance

Revenue per available unit (**Rev Per Unit**) for the last four years in park facilities and revenue generating assets is detailed in the table below.

Current Rev Per Unit

Fiscal Year	Camping Rev Per Unit	Group Camps Rev Per Unit	Day Use Rev Per Unit	Lodge Rev Per Unit	Cabin Rev Per Unit	Restaurant/Catering Rev and Unit	Golf Rev Per Unit
2019	10.7	89.08	32.3	21.45	112.25	7.25	32.11
2020	10.94	68.98	18.11	37.79	101.04	5.95	20.75
2021	14.42	29.23	12.79	27.81	121.03	10.65	36.68
2022	16.26	42.51	12.44	45.17	111.30	18.53	40.06

Projected Rev Per Unit - Based on current Rev Per Unit trends at the park and any known developments over the next four years.

Fiscal Year	Camping Rev Per Unit	Group Camps Rev Per Unit	Day Use Rev Per Unit	Lodge Rev Per Unit	Cabin Rev Per Unit	Restaurant/Catering Rev Per Unit	Golf Rev Per Unit
2023	17.45	47.61	12.00	45.15	130.18	29.71	40.79
2024	20.01	52.37	12.15	47.28	136.31	30.14	42.19
2025	21.48	57.61	12.30	49.78	143.52	30.58	43.43
2026	23.06	63.37	12.45	52.27	150.70	31.02	44.71

Customer Service

Platform / Site	Year	Customer Satisfaction Level
Net Promoter Score	2023	45
Staff Service	2023	4.00 out of 5
Total Ratings	2023	4.11 out of 5

Professional Development and Training

The following professional development and training opportunities are being explored and planned for the staff and volunteers at this park:

- NAI - CIG
- EMR
- Master Trail Builder, Chainsaw, Wildland Fire
- Accounting
- Routine management training
- Routine law enforcement training

Summary of Key Recommendations

Please provide short-term, mid-term, and long-term recommendations for addressing operational issues at the park and improving overall park performance.

Short Term Recommendations (Less than 1 year)

1. Site and Facilities

- a. Maintain existing facilities
- b. Perform basic maintenance and preventative maintenance on grounds and facilities
- c. Utilize volunteer donations to supplement park budget
- d. Replace failed irrigation system at golf course
- e. Replace lodge elevator guest wing cabs and controls

2. Operations and Staffing

- a. Better visitor experience through increased staff.
- b. Extended operation hours to meet customer demand.
- c. Implement new time keeping platform for Hospitality
- d. Upgrade Golf POS software platform

3. Customer Service / Visitor Experience

- a. Better visitor experience through increased staff.
- b. Extended operation hours to meet customer demand.
- c. Increase number of days restaurant is open with stabilized staffing model

Mid Term Recommendations (2-5 years)

1. **Site and Facilities**
 - a. Visitor Center ADA compliance
 - b. Visitor Center Bathroom accessibility during closed hours
 - c. Remodel outside catering venues
2. **Operations and Staffing**
 - a. Additional maintenance staff due to increased visitation
 - b. Extended business hours for both campground and park office
 - c. Additional service staff for Food and Beverage operations
3. **Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
 - a. Extended business hours for both campground and park office
 - b. Additional ranger staff and office staff for first contact with visitors
 - c. Remodel course restrooms and Pro Shop interior including bathrooms

Long Term Recommendations (5+ years)

1. **Site and Facilities**
 - a. Adding walking and biking lanes on roadways
 - b. Picnic shelter and parking improvements
 - c. Parking area at Creech Hollow lake
 - d. Renovate bunkers and cart paths at golf course
 - e. Design Lodge guestroom renovation
2. **Operations and Staffing**
 - a. Additional maintenance staff due to increased visitation
 - b. Additional ranger and office staff due to increased visitation
 - c. Increase lodge overall staffing with increased occupancy
3. **Customer Service / Visitor Experience**
 - a. Providing better quality access throughout the park ie. walking lane
 - b. Providing better family and nature atmosphere for visitors
 - c. Allowing visitors to access Creech Hollow Lake with ADA parking and picnic facilities

Resource Management Plan

A resource management plan is a specific statement of the objectives you have for your land and natural resources, as well as any significant cultural and historic resources stewarded by the state park. This includes a defined series of priorities and activities that will take place in order to meet those objectives. This can include future potential land acquisitions or divestitures that are necessary to meet the park's resource management goals and objectives.

To provide professional, effective management and stewardship of the park and all its resources, present compelling interpretation of the park's story and resources, provide opportunities for safe enjoyable outdoor and recreational experiences to all park visitors, provide a safe and inspiring workplace for all park employees and volunteers, manage all park operations to be as efficient and cost effective as possible and to partner with local community leaders to bring a positive economic impact to the area surrounding the park.

The contents of this resource management plan are as follows:

1. Resource Management Objectives
2. Resource Inventory and Assessment
3. Management Strategies
4. Priority Actions
5. Supplemental Information

Resource Management Objectives

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be nationally recognized for exemplary stewardship of natural and cultural resources.

Objective - *More and better stewards:* Increase internal and external stewards who share Tennessee State Parks core values and can contribute to the State Parks mission to steward Tennessee's natural and cultural resources.

Objective - *Better resource management practices:* Identify, manage, and restore unique natural and cultural resources for generations to come.

Objective: *Better data and technology:* Leverage data and technology to help inform and guide decisions on natural and cultural resources stewardship.

Aligned with these objectives are specific strategies to achieve the desired outcomes for the natural, cultural, and historic resources of this park.

Strategies

- A. Manage Oak Hickory Forest through removal of non-desirable species
- B. Increase volunteer stewardship
- C. Continue to preserve and protect cultural and natural resources within Montgomery Bell State Park.
- D. Monitor critical areas for erosion and resource damage
- E. Maintain boundary assessments for neighboring encroachments or impacts.

Resource Inventory and Assessment

The significant natural, cultural and historic resources of the park requiring management are detailed below including a condition assessment rating for each. Condition assessments are selected from the following options based on what most describes the current condition of the resource:

1. **Excellent** – resource is in excellent condition; all potential threats to the integrity of the resource are currently managed and effectively mitigated.
2. **Good** – resource is generally in good condition and stable; threats to the integrity of the resource require regular management in order to mitigate.
3. **Fair** – resource is in stable condition but difficult to mitigate ongoing threats; additional management support is required.
4. **Poor** – resource is generally in poor condition with management support required to both improve existing conditions and address threats.
5. **Critical** – resource is highly threatened or deteriorated and requires immediate management prioritization.

Significant Park Resources	Quantity	Current Conditions	Notes
Upland Hardwood forest	3,000 acres	Fair	The forest is healthy, but the root system is degrading especially on red oaks
Lakes	Lake Woodhaven 50 acres Lake Acorn 26 acres Creech Hollow Lake 17.5 acres	Good	Excessive carp population and excessive siltation in Lake Woodhaven Continued aquatic management practices for aquatic grasses Monitor and control beaver population on Creech Hollow Lake
Riparian	10 miles	Poor	Visible erosion of creek banks is noticeable due to increased visitation and storm runoff
Historic CCC structures -Group Camp 1, Lake Woodhaven Spillway, CCC Base camp, Spring house	3	Fair	Group Camp 1 needs electrical renovation and assessed for further repairs including termite damage. Recommend registering Spillway and Group Camp 1 with National Historic Registry
Cemeteries	7	Poor	Cemeteries need to be maintained by removing saplings and invasive plants.
Wetland Area on Hwy 70	5 acres	Excellent	Work with local universities for inventory of aquatic species.

Management Strategies

The management strategies outlined below are directly correlated to the resources identified previously in the *Resource Inventory and Assessment* section immediately above. These are general and overall management recommendations for each resource from which priority actions will be determined. Each resource has both a “Public Use” management strategy (which could include limited or no public access, or managed access with infrastructure and regulation) and a “General Management” strategy.

The priority assignments reflect the highest resource management priorities of the park over the next 1-5 years (High Priority) and 6-10 years (Moderate Priority)

Resource	Management Recommendations	Priority
CCC Camp	Public Use: Overnight group stays via reservation General Management: Group Camp 1 needs electrical renovation and assessed for further repairs including termite damage. Recommend registering Spillway and Group Camp 1 with National Historic Registry	High
Hall Springs	Public Use: General access General Management: Quarterly surveys of spring	High
Backcountry Camping	Public Use: Overnight camping via reservation General Management: surveys of shelters as needed	High
Forest	Public Use: Hiking and general public access General Management: Erosion management, vegetation management, invasive plant removal	Moderate
Lakes	Public Use: Day use, swimming, boating, fishing General Management: Excessive carp population and excessive siltation in Lake Woodhaven Continued aquatic management practices for aquatic grasses Monitor and control beaver population on Creech Hollow Lake	High

Land Management Strategies

In some cases, strategic land acquisitions or divestitures are necessary to meet the overall resource management goals and objectives of the park. This can include opportunities to address buffers, watersheds, viewsheds, inholdings, and adjacent properties. The table below details **general strategies** for land management. Timelines refer to Short Term (1-3 years), Mid Term (4-6 years), and Long Term (7-10 years).

Land Management Strategy	Timeline
Acquire property on southwestern edge of park	Short Term
Acquire property on northeastern edge of park	Short Term

Interpretive Programming and Education Plan

The Interpretation, Programming, and Education planning is currently going through a planning process to further build out the process. This section only represents the very basic framework. As TSP moves forward with the future of Interpretive programming and education this section will likely be changed to accommodate those modifications.

Attached to this plan are the Interpretive Program Templates in fillable PDF forms.

Montgomery Bell State Park was founded by the national park service as a Civilian Conservation Corps project to preserve and protect the historical significance of the iron ore industry of the 1800's and the birthplace of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Montgomery Bell State Park offers ample recreational opportunities including, but not limited to, mountain bike trails, camping, hiking trails, and 18-hole golf course, group camp as well as a Lodge and conference center. Interpretive programs such as nature hikes, reptile and birds of prey programs are offered to showcase the abundant and diverse flora and fauna of the western highland rim of middle Tennessee. Montgomery Bell State Park will continue to preserve the past while maintaining the resources and intrinsic values for all generations.

Interpretation, Programming and Education Goals

Goal: Tennessee State Parks will be the most accessible, welcoming, and inviting system of parks that enriches Tennesseans and visitors through excellent interpretation, education, and resource-based recreation.

Objective: *accessible, welcoming, and inviting to all:* create quality and varied programs of interpretation, recreation, and outreach so that all audiences feel welcome and invited.

Objective: *high quality programming:* develop and support mission-based and resource-relevant programs to engage visitors, empower staff, and develop community wellbeing.

Objective: *resource-based outdoor recreation:* provide resource-based outdoor recreation opportunities that ensure representation of Tennessee's natural, scenic, and cultural resources.

Park Interpretation and Programs should be developed with the following desired outcomes:

- Building stewards
- Ensuring Equity
- Providing the Highest Value
- Developing Resource Based Programming
- Supporting Staff

Strategic Programs and Services

The strategies detailed below with corresponding action plans are aligned with the Comprehensive Strategic Plan of Tennessee State Parks.

Strategy – Telling Full Stories: to identify and replicate best practices while establishing new methods for representing diverse, equitable, inclusive, and just dialogues.

Action Plan: Continue research and documentation on lesser-known park stories to inject a broader perspective of the historical events within the park.

Strategy – Interpretative Media: Connecting people to the resources of Tennessee State Parks with technology in ways that complement and expand interpretation within and beyond the park, giving everyone access to becoming a park steward.

Action Plan: The park will improve ADA and LEP accessible audio and visual interpretive materials and signage.

Strategy – Develop and maintain a portfolio of programs across multiple types of experiences:

- A. Interpretation of natural, historic, and cultural resources
- B. 3-5 unique experiences for all audiences
- C. Varying intensity from self-guided to immersive experiences
- D. Partnership opportunities for program delivery
- E. Varying costs to the user from “free to fee” based on value of the benefit to the participant.

Action Plan: The park will continue to provide programming opportunities through digital and traditional media, listing available programs. The park will provide unique experiences tailored to all visitors. The park will strive to provide self-guided opportunities and continue to partner with local schools and civic organizations. Programs will be listed on our website to communicate whether there is a cost associated with the program.

Strategy – Develop and maintain diverse and varied resourced-based outdoor recreation opportunities across multiple types of experiences:

- A. Managing recreational use with the stewardship needs of the resource.
- B. Varying intensity from self-guided to guided experiences
- C. Partnership opportunities for program delivery
- D. Varying costs to the user from “free to fee” based on value of the benefit to the participant and to the park.

Action Plan: Areas will be monitored for visitor impact to critical areas to protect the resource. The park will continue to provide opportunities from self-guided to ranger led programs. Open recreational fields will continue to be utilized by park visitors. The park will continue with partnership opportunities from other agencies / other parks / other divisions to provide diverse quality programming. The rangers will continue to offer both fee-based in depth programs as well as more general free programs.

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS:

- Nonpersonal Interpretation: Interpretive media that do not require a person to deliver a message (i.e. exhibits, waysides, brochures, signs, magazines, books, etc.).
- Personal Interpretation: Personal Interpretation: One person or persons providing interpretation to another person or persons.
- Interpretive Program: Activities, presentations, publications, audio-visual media, signs, and exhibits that convey key heritage resource messages to audiences. (Adapted from US Fish & Wildlife Service)
- Interpretation: a purposeful approach to communication that facilitates meaningful, relevant, and inclusive experiences that deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and inspire engagement with the world around us.

Financial Performance Goals

Financial performance goals are a critical performance management tool of the Tennessee State Park System. While the financial performance of parks are managed more intently at the system level, individual parks are expected to recover a portion of their operating costs through the generation of earned revenues where appropriate and to contribute to the system goals. The majority of earned revenues at state parks are generated through facility usage (campsites, cabins, lodge rooms, rentable pavilions, etc.), the delivery of fee-based programs and services, equipment rental and usage, and retail sales. Other forms of revenue generation come from golf courses and restaurants where those amenities are present. That said, not all parks have the same ability to generate earned revenues because the availability of facilities or programs vary widely from one park to the next. The “recovery” of operational costs by earned revenues is referred to as “cost recovery”. Operating costs beyond those supported by earned revenues represents the extent to which state funding support operations at each park.

The table below represents the overall park cost recovery for this specific park for the most recent fiscal year and forecast estimates for the upcoming five years. These estimates are based on projection estimates for known and foreseeable costs and recovery figures.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE GOALS						
	Current Cost Recovery (2022)	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2023	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2024	Target Cost Recovery: FY: 2025	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2026	Target Cost Recovery: FY 2027
Park Overall	45%	76.2%	76.4%	77.2%	80.2%	81%

